PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDING COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES WITH:

Orientation Programs	99%
Mail-In Registration	40%
Phone-In Registration	15%
Orientation Fees	55%
Upperclassmen Returning After New Students	84%
Research evaluations of Orientation Efforts	3%
Special Target Orientation for:	
1. Residence Hall Students	45%
2. Non-Traditional Students	39%
3. Academically Underprepared Students	28%
4. Commuter Students	30%
5. Handicapped Students	13%
6. Two-Year Students	10%
7. Transfer Students	2%

The above table represents 487 responses from a randomly selected group of 750 colleges and universities in 1983-84.

Brian Seeger

An Integrated Program To Attract Potential Students, Retain Present Students, and Satisfy Past Students

Concerns confronting higher education today seem to be declining enrollment, decreased financial support, and an increased demand for accountability. The future of higher education is not hopeless, but institutions will be forced to "dig deep" and be creative in their use of existing resources and talents to meet the increasing demand for quality education. The approach of the future must be to use what exists better, as opposed to requesting additional financial support. D'Agostino (1985) posed three important concerns for college deans:
1. How do we attract large numbers of candidates into this program?
2. How do we help graduates plan their careers?
3. How do we raise funds for special projects for current students?
(p. 22)

The purpose of this article is to examine some existing services at colleges and universities and how they might be creatively and effectively linked. Specifically, recruitment/marketing, career development, placement, and alumni relations will be examined. Each of these services will be discussed separately, and a conceptual framework for linking these services will be presented including rationale, advantages, and limitations.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The emergence and use of "marketing" in institutions of higher education has increased in recent years (Brooker and Noble, 1985; Discenza, Feguson, and Wisner, 1985; Marshall and Delman, 1984; Hearin, et. al., 1984; Lehocky, et. al., 1984). Attractive publications, personal visits, letters, and special programs have been mentioned and creative use of the telephone, newspaper, and media have also

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been discussed. Discenza, et. al., (1985) emphasized the importance of identifying students' decision making criteria and utilizing this in the marketing effort. Also, Discenza identified factors important to a students' selection of a college (e.g., quality of faculty, specific academic program, cost of school, etc.). Literature regarding techniques of advertising in higher education is plentiful, but there is little documentation on its effectiveness.

Career development has received increased visibility recently. Academic advising, developmental advising, career counseling, advising as teaching, and lifelong learning are all current themes. Studies have recognized the relationship effective of career development in student satisfaction (Kramer, Arrington, and Chynoweth, 1985), persistence and performance (Forrest, 1982). Career development has gained prominence as economic cutbacks, combined with increased tuition and student expectations, have created the necessity for quality career planning. In contract, faculty still perceive career development or advising as a low priority function when compared to teaching or research (Mager and Myers, 1983; Teague and Grites, 1980).

Career-related literature has also focused upon complex models and decision making paradigms to explain the developmental process (Rosenberg and Smith, 1985; Kaufman and Case, 1983; McGrevy, Barrick, and Snodgrass, 1983). An underlying assumption to these models is that the developmental process is complex and not readily understood. However, it might be helpful to consider career development in some fairly simple terms or processes.

Hindman (1984), indicated a practical approach to career development utilizing ongoing first year orientation with academic advisors covering topics such as academic programs, self-assessment, career research and exploration, self-marketing, and cooperative education. Field trips and special guest speakers on various fields were also part of the program provided.

In its simplest form, career development may be a matter of providing practical, hands-on information to help one make career decisions. Most important to this process would be the provider of the information and the kind of information.

Obviously linked to career development is placement. In many insitutions, the placement and career development functions occur in the same office. Currently, there are several innovative placement programs being offered (Roth, 1985; Klein, 1985; Devlin, et. al., 1984; Penrose, 1984). Shopping lists, international employment, computerized placement, and statistical research are some of the current themes. As job markets become even more competitive in certain areas, it will be essential that placement centers provide more effective job search strategies, geographic relocation information, potential contacts and current data on job trends, as well as job vacancies. Communication will become a vital link in connecting employers with prospective employees.

Alumni have traditionally been considered sources of revenue. While alumni have served in some capacities on advisory boards, their talents have often been overlooked. Jackson (1985), suggested that alumni could be used to "identify talented students, cultivate potential candidates and encourage admitted students to enroll." (pg. 210) According to Jackson, alumni admissions would expand the size and scope of the school's recruitment program and could bring benefits to the school through networking, donations, and greater regard for the

university. The conclusion was that alumni could bring a broad array of benefits to the university (e.g., diversity, geographic location, contacts, prestige, loyalty).

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Each area presented previously (marketing, career development, placement, and alumni relations) provides an essential service to the university and student. Each area may also be creatively trying to meet the challenges of limited resources and increased demands for quality. However, there has been little, if any, attempt to link these services and their components. The next section will be devoted to developing a conceptual framework by which these student services can be joined in a realistic and effective manner.

THE MODEL

For this model, student development will be referred to on a continuum basis. Each student will fall somewhere on the continuum during his or her time at the university. Should a student enroll at a university, persist to graduation and maintain contact as an alumnus, he or she will progress all along the continuum.

TABLE 1
Attracting, Retaining and Satisfying Students
The ARS Model

Stage	Student Type	Service Provided
Pre-enrollment	Prospective	Marketing
Orientation	Admitted/Enrolled	Familiarization
-----	-----	Transition
Matriculation	Enrolled/Attending	Career Development
Graduation	Job Seeker	Placement
Post-graduation	Alumnus	Communication
-----	-----	Participation

Table 1. Outline the stages, types of students and services provided by the ARS Model.

The following terms are defined for this model and are components of the continuum.

1. **Pre-enrollment.** A stage at which the student is undecided about college, major, and career. A student in this stage is a prospective student.

2. **Orientation.** Stage where student has been admitted, has registered for classes, and is planning to attend. The orientation student is becoming familiar with the university life through "pre" school activities, as well as, ongoing familiarization with the university during classes.

3. **Matriculation.** Step at which student is attending class, pursuing a degree in a specific area, and is classified as either a freshman, sophomore, junior, or senior.

4. **Graduation.** The stage where a student has completed requirements for graduation and is seeking, or has secured, initial employment.

5. **Post-graduation.** Stage where the student has been employed for a period of time, may be arbitrary or designated.

Figure one below takes the model a step farther in describing the interaction and relationship of services and students during the different stages of the model.
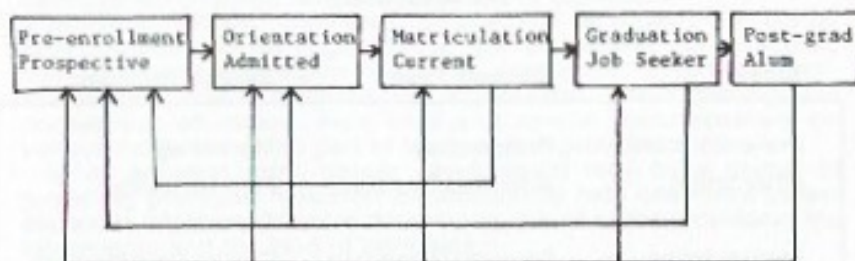
FIGURE 1

Figure 1. A diagram showing the interaction of variables in the ARS Model.

RATIONALE AND BENEFITS

The model has not been implemented. The rationale and potential benefits of such a model are largely speculative. It is important to note that there is no attempt in this model to alter services already provided by a university, only to possibly improve them through greater coordination of effort.

It is apparent from the model that it is assumed that alumni are vital resources in marketing, orienting, developing, and placing students. Alumni who have been through the university can help identify prospective students in their academic discipline or geographic area. The familiarity of the alumnus with the student provides a common link between the university and student. It adds credibility to the university as well as decreasing the anxiety a student might feel in selecting a college.

For the student planning to attend a university, an alumnus can be a friend or confidant who can answer questions for the student and parents. Creating a less threatening atmosphere during the transition from high school or junior college to a university may play a role in the retention of the new student.

As a potential mentor, the alumnus can serve as a role model, source of career information and seasonal employment opportunities, and bridge between the "theory" of the university and the "application" of the discipline. Thus, the alumnus can be effective in assisting the student in professional development by providing information and experiences about specific career paths.

A key for all students is the job placement process. An alumnus in a specific agency, in a specific geographic region and employed for a period of time can be a tremendous source of job information. D'Agostino (1985) pointed out that alumni/professor relationships can be helpful in career placement and student recruitment. Job leads, references, agency related information, and personal contacts are all possibilities. The concept of networking to utilize people to attract, retain, and place other people is an integral part of the program. Using existing talents and resources can save money and time, as well as create a positive feeling among past graduates of the university.

The model also utilizes the experience of graduating and matriculating students to assist prospective and enrolled students in personal and career development. Developing a support network for academic assistance, personal support, social opportunities and encouragement can be effective in retaining the student and increasing persistence to graduation. Peer opinions sometimes weigh more heavily in a prospective student's decision making process than input from faculty or administrative personnel. The principle underlying the relationship of these groups is that experience can be a good teacher, and peer interaction is often an effective tool in personal and professional growth.

Inherent in a model such as this are limitations. One such limitation is the need for a centralized office to coordinate the various activities explained. Whether this is done on a departmental, college, or university level is less important than the need for communication.

A large data base must be established that can store, retrieve, and manipulate the necessary data. Information concerning prospective, enrolled, graduating students, and alumni must be available. Data must be available to administrators to evaluate the marketing activities that are successful, graduation rates, and placement rates.

There must be a recognition by the university that fund raising in this program will be of secondary importance to providing service and making graduates feel a continued relationship with the university. The assumption that increased contributions will occur because the alumni feel "part" of the university must satisfy the institution.

A final consideration must be how the program will be initiated, assessed, and evaluated. The first question is whether the program is a student service or an administrative function. Secondly, since enrollment, matriculation, graduation, and placement are ongoing, when is the optimal time for implementation. What kind of data should be assessed? How should data be interpreted? How are criteria for the success or failure of the program determined? There are many questions and issues which must be addressed before the program can be started.

While limitations exist, there are also many possible benefits. In the

case of alumni, graduating, and matriculating students, the feeling that they are important to the university and that they have an opportunity to return some of what they have received is a powerful source of continued support and loyalty among students.

Obviously, any student who is; helped in the selection of a college, assisted in the transition to college, aided in clarifying career goals, and eventually finds a job, will be grateful. This gratitude can be repaid in positive evaluations and comments about the university, monetary contributions, and, as suggested by the model, a contribution of talent to the university.

SUMMARY

The article has focused on an innovative program to effectively use existing resources and services at a university for enrollment, career development, placement, and alumni relations. The intent is to focus on a conceptual, practical model that would coordinate services that are directly or indirectly linked. There are limits, but in an era of declining enrollments and finances, it can be a cost-effective alternative.

Continued development of this model to include specific activities at each stage of the continuum, a timeline or guidelines for implementation, and assessment procedures are needed. Future literature should also address the proper administrative channels to follow to gain support for the program.

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